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# THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY
THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY
AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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(*c*) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy and the exemplification in practice of those principles through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is *"similarity of aim, purpose and teaching,"* and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."*

---

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate; it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the Form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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A U M

The body, ungoverned by the Self, is like a cart without a driver, unintelligent and mad.
—Tibetan Verse.

# THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXIX November, 1940 No. 1

## WORK FOR THEOSOPHY

Where shall we find the true foundation for a changed civilization that all men and women can see and stand on? It is not philosophies nor religious nor political panaceas that are needed; but *Knowledge,* and a wider scope of vision than the vicissitudes of one short physical life.—Robert Crosbie.

ALL work for Theosophy is inspired and sustained by the heart-felt desire for spiritual unity. This feeling is the ichor of devotion which comes finally to permeate the whole life of those who dedicate themselves to the Cause of Theosophy. There is not a student, not a worker in the ranks, however humble his undertakings, in whom this feeling has not been born. It is the longing for a higher life, not for one, but for all. It is a boundless pity for the miseriesof human kind, in which all personal afflictions are forgotten, all single sufferings lost. The feeling comes, perhaps, after glimpsing the dull despair written on the face of one who passes in the street, or from the anguished cry of a soul who sees no escape from its self-made destiny. Among the tragedies which lies all about, there is always one which penetrates the heart of the natural lover of his fellows—an experience uniquely his, yet which, under the transmuting power of compassion, becomes an avenue to universal perception, giving, in this life, the first vision of the Path.

In the light of this vision, each obstacle becomes a beckoning opportunity. Each limitation has the image of responsibility and every circumstance provides a field of action. So long as the vision is cherished in the heart, the fire of devotion will burn. Not high and brilliantly, perhaps, through all our days, but its light can never die. When the radiance seems gone, the soul can know that it will come again. Deep beneath the surface may be a crust of selfishness not yet destroyed, or a laziness still unperceived holds back the fuel from the

lamp. Perhaps a coarser blaze has since been lighted, or from low-burning coals allowed to burst to flame. To uncover such barriers is itself a task of devotion, though bringing pain instead of joy and enthusiasm.

It is one of the mysteries of human nature that the feeling cherished by the soul will answer no arbitrary call. Despondency longs for some comforting assurance that all will be well whether we strive or no. But the feeling of devotion has no power to silence warnings of neglect or compromise. The essential probity of the soul prevents. The heart can never supply what is sought in other portions of the being; devotion answers only to the symmetry of purpose in the whole man. Once the vision came strong and free; individual Karma joined the channels of perception so that we saw and *knew*. But the wheel turns, and only the causes which brought vision in the past can give that sight again.

Work for Theosophy becomes spiritually effective in the light of this vision. From the feeling of impersonality flow all benefits of work done. Another energy than selfish resolve is needed to move the hearts of others. Ethics is a science, and there are laws of service to be followed. Work for humanity implies that there are conditions to which workers must conform. Such work, obviously, must be literally *for humanity*. This means doing work that is needed, not simply what one might "like" to do. Preference for one sort of activity does not necessarily mean that such activity is most needed. If the preference is so strong as to cause neglect in other directions, then the work is not done for humanity at all. Work that is not *liked* is usually work that ought to be done. Hours spent in study may not appeal, and the excuse be made that simple truths are after all the best. But simplicity unsupported by depth becomes mere superficiality in practice. Just as, conversely, deep study which neglects the needs of minds to be reached can achieve only pedantry.

Thus, work for Theosophy means, first and foremost, work in and on ourselves. In lesser endeavors, such as earning a living or practicing a profession, often a long period must be spent in preparation before anything practical may be accomplished. In Theosophy, however, the preparation is a most practical part of the work. Its beneficent effects are felt by all others engaged in the same task, giving support in ways unseen and adding new energy to the common reservoir of strength which sustains every disciple.

Devotion is the rock upon which the house of knowledge must be built. It is the moral power which infuses even the simplest statements of the teaching with help and hope for all. It is the living bond

of human unity, without which brotherhood can be no more than form. From it is born the faith that moves mountains of ignorance, and the courage that alone provides a channel for the spiritual will. Actions done in true devotion to Theosophy, to humanity, are alight with the sacred fire of altruism, which finds its natural hearth in every human soul. As that fire spreads and grows, understanding will open, and minds become porous to the soul's monitions.

"Though there may seem to be little action on the part of Theosophical disciples, there is much action on inner planes of being, and that action never but for the benefit of humanity. If only once any considerable number of persons could take the true position and act from the true nature, right ideas would soon spread all over the earth. Once the ideas are implanted in our minds, we can help the world by speaking of them, and by exemplifying them. We can do that much, however selfishly the world moves on."

---

## The Heart's Need

In the name of Theosophy certain writings, lectures, talks, emanating from the heart are offered to the public. Flowing naturally from within, motivated by earnest and pure desire to light the paths of searchers for truth, these expressions are fundamentally sound. Safeguarded by careful checking with recorded true teachings, they are simply set forth as heart-felt offerings which *register*—in high and in low places, with the learned, with the illiterate, wherever there is latent consubstantiality. This was true of the fundamentally sound two thousand and more years ago, as it is true today. The pure in heart soon turn from trying to read within empty words. The spiritual will is potently moved by sustained desire to study, understand and help all life. Something transcendent flows toward and through selfless livers of the real; *they* are helped; their power to sense an audience—of one or many—and give with wisdom and clarity grows steadily, rapidly. Who can not give thus, in these days of poignant need, of his heart's abundance to heart's need!

# QUEEN OF THE SCIENCES

## I

HOW did man acquire his knowledge of mathematics? Was it a gradual unfoldment born of his own observations and experience, or was the science first *taught* to him by expert mathematicians who had prepared the schoolroom and designed the curriculum long before the pupils came upon the scene?

If, as is commonly believed, man began his evolution in the primordial slime, working his way upward through the lower kingdoms, slowly ascending through the savage and semi-savage stages until he finally reached the degree of civilization where the mathematical genius of an Einstein is possible, there must have been some definite point in the long journey when the conscious number sense first awoke. We know that many savage races are practically devoid of it. The Bushmen of Africa, for instance, can distinguish between one and two, but all else is "many." In curious contrast to this aboriginal incapacity, the ordinary crow can distinguish between four and five. The "solitary wasp" lays her eggs in individual cells and provides each egg with a number of live caterpillars for the grub to devour. Some species provide five, some twelve, others as high as twenty-four. In the *Genus Eumenus,* where the mother anticipates the sex of the grub, five victims are provided for the male, ten for the female. In these cases, however, the "number sense" is instinctive and unconscious, without the abstract awareness of *number.*

If mathematical knowledge was a gradual unfoldment, and the Vedas, as Max Müller suggests, were the lispings of infant humanity, how does it happen that those "infants" were lisping in fractions, while the "adult" European, only four hundred years ago, was still counting on his fingers?

Historians approach the origin of mathematics with extreme caution, most of them frankly admitting that it is impossible to say when number words first came into being. In 1926 the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was still declaring that mathematics originated with the Greeks, who *created* the science of geometry, while the medieval Arabians *invented* our system of numeration. These statements were withdrawn in the fourteenth edition, where the mathematical achievements of pre-Hellenic civilizations are dismissed with the statement that "simple observations, the induction which leads mankind to draw conclusions from a similarity of results—these characterized the world's mathematics down to about the seventh century B. C."

In the last few years, however, more and more credit is being given to the oriental nations. Louis C. Karpinski now declares that the mathematics of Descartes and Newton was made possible by the algebra, arithmetic and trigonometry of the Hindus, and that the mathematical science of Egypt and Babylonia contributed no mean part to the present day development of the science.[1] Prominent mathematicians are now openly acknowledging India as the birthplace of our numerical system, Dr. Whitehead suggesting that our numbers may have come originally from Tibet.[2]

Considering the importance of mathematics in its manifold applications, it becomes a matter of extreme interest as to where and when the science first became known. As Ralston Skinner asked over fifty years ago, "Has it been a matter of revelation in what we now know as the historic age—a cycle exceedingly modern when the age of the human race is contemplated? It seems, in fact, as to the date of its possession by man, to have been further removed in the past from the old Egyptians than are the old Egyptians from us." [3]

The ancients themselves traced the introduction of mathematics back to the "gods." Plato, in *Phaedrus,* says that Thoth-Hermes "discovered number and the art of reckoning, geometry and astronomy." According to Bousage, the Egyptians declared that mathematics had been known in their land since the days of Isis and Osiris. The Greeks claimed that Orpheus had brought the science into their land.[4] The Pythagoreans taught that man received his knowledge of mathematics from "celestial deities."

Were these "gods" actual historical characters? If so, when did they live? Bailly, who made an extensive study of the ancient traditions, came to the conclusion that the arts and sciences "were not the achievements of any one of the now or then existing nations, nor of any of the historical peoples of Asia. And that, notwithstanding the admitted erudition of the Hindus, their learning has to be referred to a people or race still more learned and more ancient than were even the Brahmins themselves." [5]

Were the Atlanteans, then, teaching mathematics at a period when Haeckel's man-ape was supposedly roaming through the primeval forests, but when, in truth, a mighty civilization was flourishing? *The Secret Doctrine* tells us that we must go back to the race which preceded the Atlantean to find the "gods" who *first* taught mathematics to men. They are described as the "seven primeval Sages"

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[1] *Science,* Feb. 17, 1939. [2] A. N. Whitehead, *Introduction to Mathematics,* p. 58.
[3] Ralston Skinner, *Source of Measures.* [4] Aristotle, *Metaphys.,* lib. iii.
[5] Bailly, *Histoire de l'astronomie ancienne.*

whose branches and offshoots assumed such generic names as Thoth-Hermes, Orpheus, Kadmus and Enoch, according to the country in which they appeared. They recorded the mysteries of nature in geometrical symbols, the keys to which were passed down from one generation of initiated disciples to the next. In many old symbolical Scriptures we find the circle, the point, the triangle, the plane, the cube, the pentacle, the hexagon, and plane figures with various sides and angles. Does this not clearly indicate that geometry was known long before the Golden Age of Greece?

Geometrical figures are not mere arbitrary figures originally set down at random. For one thing, they are flawless representations of the facts and processes of the noumenal side of nature. "There is indeed," as an intuitional thinker wrote a century ago, "a harmony of numbers in all nature; in the force of gravity, in the planetary movements, in the laws of heat, light, electricity and chemical affinity, in the forms of animals and plants, in the perception of the mind."[6] Plato said that "God geometrizes." Balzac asked, "The smallest as the most immense creations, are they not to be distinguished from each other by their quantities, their dimensions, their forces and their attributes, all begotten by the NUMBER?" The Kabalist Ibn Gebirol addressed the highest Deity as "the root of all numbers, whose unity is never diminished, never extended, and can never be changed."[7]

A little thought will convince us that the exact science of mathematics is the one which can best help us to approach the concept of infinity. Infinity is the basic concept of mathematics, the fundamental premise upon which the whole science rests. Counting forward, we can never find a last number. Counting backward, we can never find a number so infinitesimal that it cannot be further subdivided. Logical processes can never prove infinity, as experience shows the finitude of all things. If logic is insufficient to prove the basic assumption of mathematics, "then mathematics is founded on something more than mere logic: its creative power relies on that elusive, intangible thing which is called *intuition*."[8]

The science of mathematics as we know it must therefore be merely the outer shell covering the *real* Science of Numbers, and the numbers we use must be but the pale shadows of their prototypes. Proclus explained this fact by saying, "Before the mathematical numbers, there are the self-moving numbers; before the figures ap-

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[6] *Medical Review*, July, 1844. [7] *Kether Malchuth*.

[8] Dantzig, *Number, the Language of Science*, p. 64.

parent, the vital figures; and before producing the material worlds which move in a circle, the Creative Power produced the invisible circles." [9]

The Circle, as Emerson said, is the highest emblem in the cipher of the world. It is the symbol which will most clearly demonstrate to us our identity with the Absolute and with Deity as we see it manifested in nature. If we close our eyes, and from the center which we call "I" try to think outwards to the extremest limits in every direction, we will find that equal lines or rays of perception extend evenly in every direction, so that the utmost effort of perception will terminate in the vault of a sphere. If we train our thought first of all to a thorough acquaintance with a limited circle, and gradually expand it, we will come to a point where, without ceasing to be a circle, it yet becomes infinite and limitless, even to our inner perception. It is this circle which is known as Brahmâ, the germ, or atom, latent during pralaya, active during the life cycles, a circle which has neither circumference nor plane, only limitless expansion. Brahmâ is called an atom because we have to imagine it as a mathematical point, which, however, may be expanded into absoluteness.

As man is a small copy of the Universe, his life must also be conceived as an ever-expanding circle which, as Emerson says, "from a ring imperceptibly small, rushes on all sides outward to new and larger circles, and that without end."

But within that circle, whether it be the Great Circle of the Universe or the smaller circle of man, there must be the mathematical point which always remains in the center as the eternal and unchanging generator. As Philo Judaeus explained, "The Chaldeans were of the opinion that the Kosmos . . . is a single point . . . comprehending the soul of all things." [10] Swedenborg echoed this idea by saying that "the Universe is contained *in ovo* in the first natural point." [11]

The point which generates all the circles in nature symbolizes the power which is inherent in every being—*the power to perceive and to expand its range of perceptions.* The differences between beings are found in the range of perceptions acquired through the process of evolution. It is these differences which determine the size and circumference of every individual circle.

The point, although *potential* being, cannot be conceived as *a* being. For that to arise, there must be the perceiver, the thing perceived

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[9] Proclus, *Commentary on Euclid,* Book v.
[10] *Migration of Abraham.*
[11] *Principia Rerum Naturalia* (trans. Clissold).

and the perception gained. The point, therefore, generates the triangle, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the real individual man, the soul or the reincarnating Ego. The lower principles, which change with each incarnation, are represented in the figure by a square, which, although within the circumference of the circle, is below the triangle. Hence the mystery and sacredness of the number seven.[12]

Mathematics is a deductive science, always proceeding from universal concepts (expressed as postulates or axioms) to things or circumstances which occur in particular instances. The process of induction, which proceeds from particulars to universals, is forever banned from mathematics. Hence geometry, which follows the deductive method, has become the model for all the exact sciences. No scientific problem is considered proved until it has been formulated as a mathematical law. Even biology and the social sciences are now trying to develop mathematical standards which will permit them to be numbered among those sciences called "exact."

Nature herself thinks mathematically. In the crystal we see the most elementary form of a living thought, which sleeps in the stone, in geometrical rest, locked in the law of numbers. The pine, which is the first tree after the fern period, assumes the shape of a pyramid. "Nature is a perpetual circulatory worker," says Newton. It is a physical and mechanical law that particles or bodies in motion in themselves assume a spheroidal form—this from a planet down to a drop of rain. As soon as motion ceases, the spheroidal form alters, becoming a flat drop, then an equilateral triangle, a hexagon and so on, as Tyndall demonstrated. In observing the breaking up of ice particles in a large mass, through which he passed heat rays, he observed that the first shape assumed by the particles was triangular or pyramidal, then cubical and finally hexagonal.

Mathematics, therefore, lies at the root of the natural sciences as it lies at the root of all the arts. Is not beauty itself rooted in order, symmetry and proportion, all of which are based upon definite mathematical laws?

Plato, who had been initiated into the Mysteries and therefore knew the secret power of numbers, considered mathematics as the first essential in the training of philosophers and of those who should rule the ideal state. Hence he placed the warning above the door of his porch: *Let no one unversed in geometry enter here.* He declared that the study of mathematics from the higher point of view would awaken that dormant organ in the brain which he described

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[12] See "The Number Seven," by H.P.B., THEOSOPHY V, 515.

as the "eye of the soul" and which is now known as the pineal gland. This clearly shows that there is an *esoteric* side to mathematics, of which the ordinary student is unaware.

*The Secret Doctrine* is a treatise on Numbers from this higher point of view. A careful study of the Science of Numbers as outlined by H.P.B. will reveal some of Nature's most carefully guarded secrets. It will open up the esoteric side of Theosophy, since "figures and numbers are the key to the esoteric system." [13] It will unlock many facts now hidden behind the door of symbolism, as geometry is "the fifth divine science ('fifth' because it is the fifth key in the series of the Seven Keys to the Universal esoteric language and symbology)." [14] It will also give us one of the keys to the language of the Ego, which is based upon the occult symbols of sound, color and number. Truly, as Robert Crosbie says, the whole knowledge of the occult lies in geometrical forms and certain colors and sounds.[15]

H.P.B. declares that the real Science of Numbers is so sacred and so important in the study of Occultism that the subject can hardly be skimmed, even in so large a work as *The Secret Doctrine.* That science in its totality, however, is only for those who have proved their moral fitness to receive it. When Plato spoke of the mathematical subjects with which every freeborn citizen should be familiar, he admitted that a profound knowledge of these subjects was for "the few," [16] while Theon of Smyrna compared the mathematical disciplines to initiation in the Mysteries. This is why so few ancient mathematical treatises have come down to us. The ones available, which prove the antiquity of the science beyond all doubt, will be considered in succeeding articles.

*(To be continued.)*

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## The Uncreate

All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being, in which they lie—an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. —Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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[13] *S. D.* I, 164.

[14] *S. D.* II, 471.

[15] *Answers to Questions*, p. 221.

[16] Plato, *Laws*, 817 E; 818 A.

# OF STUDYING THEOSOPHY

[In the task of self-preparation for work for Thesophy, the question of method in study often arises in the student's mind. While, truly, the best method is "a combination of all methods," certain directions can nevertheless be given, and these are found pre-eminently in the writings of William Q. Judge. His *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* speaks of the typical western tendency "to scout careful study or practice and go in for the rapid methods inaugurated in America," which leads to ignorance and superficiality in philosophy. Yet philosophy must be taught and understood. Emotional goodness is not enough. "The greatest of the Ancients," he writes, "inculcated by both symbols and books the absolute necessity for the acquirement of philosophical knowledge, inasmuch as strength or special faculties are useless without it." In "Much Reading, Little Thought," he says of the real *students* of Theosophy that they "are beginning to see that a few books well read, well analysed, and thoroughly digested are better than many books read over once. They have learned how all that part of a book which they clearly understand at first is already their own, and that the rest, which is not so clear or quite obscure, is the portion they are to study, so that it also, if found true, may become an integral part of their constant thought." These suggestions form a fitting introduction to Mr. Judge's article, "Of Studying Theosophy," which first appeared in the Path for January, 1890.—Editors, THEOSOPHY.]

IT is often asked: How should I or my friend study theosophy? In beginning this study a series of "don'ts" should first engage the student's attention. Don't imagine that you know everything, or that any man in scientific circles has uttered the last word on any subject; don't suppose that the present day is the best, or that the ancients were superstitious, with no knowledge of natural laws. Don't forget that arts, sciences, and metaphysics did not have their rise with European civilization; and don't forget that the influence of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of ancient Greece is still imposed upon the modern mind. Don't think that our astronomers would have made anything but a mess of the zodiac if the old Chaldeans had not left us the one we use. Don't forget that it is easy to prove that civilization of the highest order has periodically rolled around this globe and left traces great and small behind. Don't confuse Buddhism with Brahmanism, or imagine that the Hindus are Buddhists; and don't take the word of English or German Sanscrit scholars in explanation of the writings and scriptures of eastern nations whose

thoughts are as foreign in their form to ours as our countries are. One should first be prepared to examine with a clear and unbiased mind.

But suppose the enquirer is disposed at the outset to take the word of theosophical writers, then caution is just as necessary, for theosophical literature does not bear the stamp of authority. We should all be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us, and we cannot do that if we have swallowed without study the words of others.

But what is study? It is not the mere reading of books, but rather long, earnest, careful thought upon that which we have taken up. If a student accepts reincarnation and karma as true doctrine, the work is but begun. Many theosophists accept doctrines of that name, but are not able to say what it is they have accepted. They do not pause to find out what reincarnates, or how, when, or why karma has its effects, and often do not know what the word means. Some at first think that when they die they will reincarnate, without reflecting that it is the lower personal I they mean, which cannot be born again in a body. Others think that karma is—well, karma, with no idea of classes of karma, or whether or not it is punishment or reward or both. Hence a careful learning from one or two books of the statement of the doctrines, and then a more careful study of them, are absolutely necessary.

There is too little of such right study among theosophists, and too much reading of new books. No student can tell whether Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* writes reasonably unless his book is learned and not merely skimmed. Although his style is clear, the matter treated is difficult, needing firm lodgment in the mind, followed by careful thought. A proper use of his book, *The Secret Doctrine, The Key to Theosophy,* and all other matter written upon the constitution of man, leads to an acquaintance with the doctrines as to the being most concerned, and only when that acquaintance is obtained is one fitted to understand the rest.

Another branch of study is that pursued by natural devotees, those who desire to enter into the work itself for the good of humanity. Those should study all branches of theosophical literature all the harder, in order to be able to clearly explain it to others, for a weak reasoner or an apparently credulous believer has not much weight with others.

Western theosophists need patience, determination, discrimination, and memory, if they ever intend to seize and hold the attention of the world for the doctrines they disseminate.—WILLIAM BREHON.

# THE PROBLEM OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

THOSE whose good Karma it is to come into first-hand contact with the Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky soon find they have encountered a new world without leaving the old one. They have entered the plane of the mind at a new elevation while still existing on the plane of sense perception. All men have a life of mind, but its experiences are seldom distinguished from those of physical existence. The theosophist is one who seeks to establish the habit of conscious, objective perception in the world of ideas.

When a man deliberately shuts off the perceptions of the sense world, his attention is transferred from external to internal objectivity, from matter to mind. Reflection upon this transfer, upon the unfamiliar objects of this new existence, will show him that, as perceiver and experiencer, he is far better acquainted with the world of the senses than that of the mind. He perceives that he has been far more concerned with the sensations of *both* worlds than with any real consideration of their relations, one with the other, or of his own connection with them. If, in the progress of time, the man comes to the position where he can partially disentangle self from the perceptions of the psychic world, the world of ideas, he is then ready to contemplate the possibility of existence in a *spiritual* world or state. What might this involve?

By the transition of his attention from sensation to self, the man is ready to perceive that it is possible to detach self from the world of images, as from the world of sensation, and still *be*. In the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali, as rendered into English by W. Q. Judge, the state is thus described: "At the time of concentration the soul abides in the state of a spectator without a spectacle." In this state a man becomes free of the bondage of ideas; it is, in short, the state of true immortality.

Attention may be either voluntary or involuntary. When the mind is involuntarily attracted to any given object, it may be as involuntarily attracted to another of the forms which appear and disappear —for it is easy to perceive that mental images have a life of their own which enables them also to remain intact, therefore to move and act on their own account in their own world, as the body does in its. Thus the perceiver may realize that the phenomena of the psychic world pertain, not to self alone, but that every idea in the metaphysical world is more and other than is commonly recognized.

As certainly as man is a being, so also, within ideas must be real beings with the same fundamental power of perception and action as himself, though not in the same degree, and must, like himself, be endowed with memory, will, and sensation—with consciousness of their own kind, differing only in this, that the factors active in them are fewer than those in mankind.

Ideas are but names given by man to forms as reflected in his own psychic sphere. That they have an identity of their own is sometimes recognized or admitted, but that they are actually living beings is either altogether ignored, denied, or recognized only from the purely human plane of perception and action. Many of the ideas dignified by the name of Science belong in the same category as the "bestiary" spectacles and tales in the child stage of human mentality. During that mental period the animals are imagined to possess human characteristics. They reason, talk, act as human beings do, although this imaginary attribution is inconsistent with the facts of human experience. The bestiary fiction is the legitimate forerunner of its modern counterpart, the fiction we call the Darwinian theory of human evolution. The child mind takes the bestiary play for what it is, "make-believe," but the modern adult mind takes the Darwinian bestiary seriously. Hence we find so many men enacting the spectacle in reverse: human beings who behave like animals because they look below and not above, without and not within themselves for "the origin of species." They are entangled by the living net of their own ideas—the inhabitants of the psychic world.

This is Materialism as the opposite extreme from Theology. Neither of these perceptions is consistent in itself, with the other, nor with the numerous phenomena of human experience which are so consistent with each other and with nature as to deserve the term knowledge. Knowledge, in its mathematical signification, is complete in itself, whether as a whole or in its parts. Insofar as man or any imaginable being is concerned, to the extent that one has knowledge he has nothing to *un*learn, in no matter which direction his knowledge may extend, nor how much more knowledge may be acquirable in this or that direction. The nature of knowledge itself, as an "abstraction" to human consciousness, requires the disengagement of self from the attraction of the psychic world. The process of this detachment is what is called Meditation in Occultism. The continuity of human consciousness—which means personal immortality—cannot be gained so long as self is attached to or identified with the worlds of images. A far more recondite world of perception than the two fields or states familiarly named waking and dreaming has to be found. How? By

Meditation which culminates in *Egoism,* as Patanjali defines it, where soul is conscious of self alone.

Just as in modern, so in Occult science, words loosely applied by laymen and everyhere popularly used are given precise values. Besides this, every esoteric as well as every exoteric Science has what may be called its own mathematical language—its own formulas and idioms. Not only do these peculiarities have to be intellectually acquired, but, whatever the subject or object discussed in true Occultism, whatever the figures and symbols employed, one and all contain a significance entirely ignored in physical science and almost wholly misunderstood and misapplied in metaphysics and theology.

This significance implies and relates to soul-values—the so-called "moral equation" in everything, every impression and expression of consciousness, human, preterhuman or sub-human. With average mankind, and even more with the intelligentsia, soul-values are everywhere sacrificed in greater or less degree when they come into conflict with personal desires. Soul-values have nevertheless to become primary to one who would master occult science, for they alone are unalloyed with the sense and psychic images which bind man to illusion.

The inquirer or the would-be disciple in occultism has, then, to take, at first theoretically and then practically, two negative steps of retreat, if he is to profit better than the layman, the priest, and the scientist, from such records and instruction as are publicly accessible, either from the past or in the present. He has to recognize that the language used is mathematical, whatever the symbols employed; he has to recognize that the method of instruction consistently followed by the true Teacher is also mathematical. When the pupil is ready to say to the Instructor: "The choice is made, I thirst for Wisdom," he will recognize the validity of the Occult reply: "Prepare thyself, for thou wilt have to travel on alone. The teacher can but point the way. The Path is one for all, the means to reach the goal must vary with the Pilgrims." In the mathematics of the soul, as in ordinary education, the answers are not ready-made; the student has to solve his own problem, which is that of self-knowledge.

# THEOSOPHY AND CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

WHAT obstacles does Theosophy encounter in its approach to the modern man? They are not new, and they center around the primary obstacle, which is self-interest, whether narrow or "enlightened." What is new is the particular way in which objections are stated—the prevailing cast of thought in which the arguments and emotional reactions are formed.

By "prevailing cast of thought" is meant the conception of scientific method, not any one set of positive ideas on a given subject matter. Conflicting theories abound concerning every problem. It is not here that agreement is to be found, but solely in the general method of procedure. Scientists and laymen alike are convinced that to know a thing is to know it scientifically, that is, on the basis of evidence obtained under experimental conditions. This being the case, let us examine some of the fundamental characteristics of scientific method to see how various objections to Theosophy are framed in terms of it.

Scientific method arose with the development of experimental science. It involved a break with pure deductive reasoning. Deduction is simply the development of the meaning of logical propositions; it drains out what the propositions contain implicitly. The syllogism is a familiar type of deductive argument. Take for example the propositions: "All vertebrates are living beings; All men are vertebrates." These two propositions contain as part of their meaning the proposition, "All men are living beings." The same may be said of the propositions: "All men are dogs; All rabbits are men." Inevitably, according to the same logical principles, we draw the conclusion, "All rabbits are dogs." We see that the form of our reasoning has nothing to do with truth and falsity, but only with consistency. We take out of our premises, in the form of a conclusion, what we have put into them originally. If our premises are true, our conclusion is true. But we cannot prove the truth of any proposition simply by deducing it; all depends on the truth of what we deduce it from. If we attempt to deduce every considered proposition we involve ourselves in an infinite regress; we regard every premise as a conclusion to be deduced. Somewhere we must come to rest in propositions accepted without argument. In a deductive system these propositions are called postulates.

Mathematicians have discovered that there is not only one system of geometry. There are as many different systems as there are sets of postulates. Similarly, it is conceivable that other systems of laws might hold for nature. But in the multiplicity of logically conceived systems we are dealing merely with the consistent and possible. The question for science is, which of these logically conceived possibilities refers to the actual world. How are we to choose between a number of alternative possibilities, each internally consistent? For experimental science there is only one answer, by the observation of fact.

The stress of deduction led in the period of medieval scholasticism to a war of dogmatisms. Sanction for the truth of premises was sought in authority, mainly the authority of revelation. It was this authority which was called into question with the rise of scientific thought. Premises were regarded as hypotheses requiring verification. At first induction was stressed at the expense of deduction by the philosophers of the new science, but logicians have come to see that both are essential ingredients of scientific method.

Deduction is simply the expression of what is contained implicitly in propositions, or statements of relationship. It gives us nothing new. Induction, on the contrary, proceeds from particular statements to more general expressions; it goes beyond the meaning of the original propositions. Let us see how both methods are involved in a particular instance of scientific investigation. A physician diagnoses the disease of a patient. He observes symptoms *a b c,* and makes the induction that it is scarlet fever. Scarlet fever is defined as a disease which is present whenever there are symptoms *a b c d e.* But only *a b c* are observed. The physician goes beyond the observed facts when he constructs the hypothesis that *a b c d e* are all present, that is, he makes an induction. Deduction, however, enters into the verification of the hypothesis. Assuming that the disease is scarlet fever, the deduction is made that *d e* are also present. If subsequent observation reveals *d e,* the hypothesis is verified.

A similar procedure is followed in all scientific investigation. First there is a problem to be solved. Then observation is made of data which previous experience has shown to be relevant to similar problems. Then a hypothetical construction is made of a possible solution to the problem. On the basis of this construction deductions are made as to what could be observed if the hypothesis were true. If the experience confirms the predictions based on the hypothesis, then the hypothesis is to that extent verified, though not completely verified, because several hypotheses may yield the same consequences. If the

hypothesis in question turns out to be the only one consistent with already accepted knowledge, and the only one empirically verifiable, it comes to be accepted. Much trial of hypotheses is usually needed before a definite one can be established. Yet we cannot hope to attain absolute certainty with this method. Evidence is always to some extent circumstantial, and in the last analysis knowledge is always relative to the way in which problems are stated—they might have been stated in an entirely different way.

But although this method does not yield absolute certainty it works within the texture of human experience; it follows the lines of human interest and yields, for human beings at least, certain profitable results.

The scientist is by virtue of his method an empiricist. For him knowledge grows out of the experience of particular objects. Statements of laws, of course, being universal, go beyond particular experiences, but these experiences suggest them and ultimately test and verify them. Although certain objects, such as electrons, cannot be directly experienced, these objects are nevertheless conceived in terms of what is directly experienced. Thus science demands concrete referents for its terms. Terms are merely symbols. Their meaning lies in their referents. No matter how logically rigorous and convincing an argument may be, if the terms used have no referents, experiencable either directly or indirectly, the statements composing the argument cannot be said to have any definite meaning. To sum up: we may characterize scientific method as the method of experimental verification of hypotheses constructed in terms of the relations of concrete referents.

In the light of this brief analysis of scientific method let us see what sort of criticisms based on it can be raised against theosophical ideas. The usual criticism is stated in terms of referents. What, for example, in terms of human experiences, is meant by soul or spirit? The inability to indicate a concrete referent has led psychology to become more and more a biological science. The expression "psychology without a soul" has come to characterize modern psychology. For a long time even the word "consciousness" has been regarded with suspicion. To take another example, in what sense is there a "desire body"? Feelings and emotions have come to be defined in strictly biological terms.

The next point of criticism is that Theosophy does not appear to be a strictly experimental science. It is taken rather as a complete body of knowledge which is to be learned and applied. But, how are

we to regard the proposition that there is a complete body of knowledge and that there are those who know it and have handed it down to us? According to scientific method this proposition is a hypothesis which requires verification. Now how is it to be verified? Take, for example, any established scientific law. The majority accept it on faith, trusting in the integrity of the scientists who proclaim it. But in the last analysis, the only verification consists in going through the theorizing and experimentation which the scientist has done. Applying this to our proposition, the one who has completely verified it is the Master of Wisdom; all lesser ones must take it with some degree of faith. What then is the difference, for the common man, between accepting on faith the scientist's word and the Master's word? Logically speaking there is no fundamental difference. The path from faith to individual verification is the same for both. What arouses the suspicion of the modern man is that the Masters remain in the background whereas the scientists are publicly known. One is remote and difficult to find, the other easily accessible. The work of one produces tangible effects, such as inventions apparent to everyone. The work of the other is obscure—or so it seems to the mind habituated to western forms of thought; and though it is difficult to become a scientist it is still more so to become a Master of Wisdom.

All these factors and many more contribute to weaken the appeal to the average man to investigate and verify Theosophy for himself should he by any chance hear of it. It all appears to him extremely fanciful and out of touch with the work done in laboratories. Again, it appears as too much of a gamble. Its ultimate verification requires lifetimes, whereas the scientist has obtained his knowledge within a comparatively short time. When to the common man reincarnation is itself unverified, why should he undertake a type of experimentation which, so far as he knows, may be impossible, because he may never survive to fulfill it? What he would like to see, at least, is some link between scientific investigations and Theosophy. This link it is important for the Theosophist to endeavor to clarify.

The scientist draws a distinction between theory and fact. A theory is a hypothetical explanation, a fact is a hypothesis which has been verified. Much scientific work is done purely in the realm of theory, and a good deal of work must be done before experimental situations can be worked out capable of testing the hypothesis. For every problem in science there are alternative theories of solution. Each must be worked out to its logical conclusion. The scientist often devotes himself exclusively to the development of a particular hypothesis. This is for him a risk because the hypothesis may turn out to be of no

value. Yet for the pursuit of truth it is necessary that people take these risks.

The student of Theosophy finds himself in a similar position. He cannot claim that he has personally verified the whole body of knowledge which is Theosophy, or else he would not be a student. In scientific language Theosophy is then for him, whatever else it may be for others, a system of hypotheses which he is endeavoring to understand and prepare for verification—prepare in the fullest sense which Theosophy demands. For it is part of the hypothesis, if you like, that its verification requires not only intellectual discipline, but the discipline of a way of life, knowing and acting being interdependent. He must devote himself exclusively to this discipline, and this devotion requires faith. There are alternative hypotheses which at this stage cannot be disproved, yet the theosophist is he who is willing to risk the devotion which the verification of his hypothesis requires of him. Let others who are convinced of other systems devote themselves to them. The theosophist does not attempt to compel others to subscribe to his views.

What then is the task of the theosophist? It is to understand and live the message of Theosophy; to make concrete in his individual life the ideas which have been promulgated and in turn to pass them on. It is in his living experience alone that the ideas begin to have concrete meaning, that is to say, to find their referents. His theory of knowledge is in no wise different from the general one which lies behind science, that to know is to experience. He strives always for a deeper and more comprehensive experience.

Then there is the further task of bringing his growing ideas into touch with scientific knowledge. For every scientific problem there is always the possibility of working out a solution in conformity with basic theosophical ideas. This, of course, requires an intimate knowledge of the science in which the problem arises, a knowledge which can be obtained by those who find their duty in this direction. In this way theosophical ideas are made continuous with the intellectual problems of the day.

Theosophy by no means comes in conflict with scientific method taken in the broad sense of the building up of knowledge on the basis of experience. It comes in conflict only with various philosophical interpretations of the nature and scope of science. These also the theosophist must comprehend if he is to come close to the intellectual life of his time. The task of philosophy with respect to science is critical. Science confronts problems, gathers data, constructs hypo-

theses and verifies them. But philosophy attempts to determine just what is to be meant by fact, meant by data; what logical assumptions must be made as to the general structure of existence; what is the meaning of truth, etc. Within limits the work of the scientist can proceed without much attention being paid to the more general philosophical issues. The scientist is often not deeply concerned with these issues, but is willing to accept the philosophical interpretation which most appeals to him. It is against some of these philosophical interpretations that the theosophist must defend himself.

It is one thing to hold that knowledge depends on experience, another to limit ourselves to a certain type of experience. If scientific investigation is not to be circumscribed it should open itself to all types of experience, though proceed with its accustomed caution. In this connection Theosophical students will find the work of Henri Bergson, the great contemporary French philosopher, very suggestive.[1] He attempts to disclose the immediate data of consciousness. He rediscovered the reality of *intuition* for western thought. He shows how science tends to limit itself to a certain type of data. It concerns itself with that which has clear and distinct outlines, the spatial and geometrical. It neglects that which is flowing, duration and creativity. Its laws could just as well apply to a universe in which the so-called successive states were all spread out instantaneously. But we need only look into our direct experience to get the idea of concrete duration. Here we do not find mutually distinct states, but interpenetrating states, growing as in the experience of a melody. Duration is the accumulation of the past within the enduring present, which is always new because it is always growing. Here is a datum which if science took into account would open up many new lines of investigation.[2] For Bergson the increase of knowledge lies in the expansion of the range of consciousness. To know things truly is to "enter into" them, to have them as a part of one's direct experience. Concepts are needed whenever consciousness is restricted; they fill in the gaps of direct experience; they are schematic substitutes. It is the task of the seeker after truth to make himself one with things and thus ultimately to dispense with concepts.

To sum up: the theosophist's task is to prepare himself individually and in co-operation with his fellows for the verification of the principles in which he has faith and to promulgate what he knows. But

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[1] See in particular his *Time and Free Will, Creative Evolution,* and *An Introduction to Metaphysics.*

[2] The theosophist will find in this datum a concrete idea of Karma capable of indefinite expansion. Here Karma can be seen as nothing other than time maturing.

just as with the scientist who is working out the implications of a theory in which he is specially interested, he requires an attitude of humility. He does not get on a band-wagon and try to impress people with the idea that he knows the secrets of the universe. He is simply a seeker after truth who has faith in what he regards as the path to its attainment. He listens to all that those who earnestly seek the truth may say to him. He does not say, should he disagree, "No, you are wrong," but rather, "You are not following exactly the line of investigation I am working on; we shall have to see how these different investigations develop." In short, he is both humble and tolerant. It is this attitude which is the first essential to his coming into close contact with contemporary trends of thought, because in it he is one with the spirit of scientific investigation. This path can be followed without compromise, and yet with sympathy and understanding; it is one of the means by which men of science, if at first only the few, may be led to realize, in the words of H. P. Blavatsky, "that there may be indeed a close relation between materialistic Science, and Occultism, which is the complement and missing soul of the former."

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## Memory of Soul

The fact is that the human brain is simply the canal between two planes—the psycho-spiritual and the material—through which every abstract and metaphysical idea filters from the Manasic down to the lower human consciousness. Therefore, the ideas about the infinite and the absolute are not, nor can they be, within *our* brain capacities. They can be faithfully mirrored only by our Spiritual consciousness, thence to be more or less faintly projected on to the tables of our perceptions on this plane. Thus while the records of even important events are often obliterated from our memory, not the most trifling action of our lives can disappear from the "Soul's" memory, because it is no Memory for it, but an ever present reality on the plane which lies outside our conceptions of space and time.—H. P. Blavatsky.

# THE SEASON OF ACTION

OF a gift to be received or given, of an act to be done, time drinks up the flavor, unless it be quickly performed." Thus runs an ancient proverb. No fruit plucked out of season is pleasing to the taste; gone is the sweetness that is natural at its proper time. Nor has an act done out of season the zest and enthusiasm that is satisfying to the soul. To put off or delay the doing of what should be done is to rob the act of its natural flavor and deprive the soul of the spiritual aroma that flows from timely deeds.

Do we find the duties of life to be dry and irksome? Time, perhaps, has drunk up the flavor. Procrastination is a tendency that is well nigh universal in the field of human nature. So common is this trait that its presence is unnoticed, and even accepted by many as the natural expression of human behavior. To be late for an engagement is considered "smart" in the realm of good society. Who dreams that the irksome tasks of life are but unfulfilled duties from the past, or that present tardiness may be the cause of some future loss? To put off *now* a needed act may preclude for us the karmic fruition of a much desired opportunity or place in the future scheme of things.

Viewed from the physical plane, an act is the same, no matter *when* performed. Not so from the plane of soul. The time and place for fulfillment of duty is a cyclic and karmic event. It is the coming together under law of all the beings involved, for we never act alone. Our own place in the fitness of things is but a fragmentary aspect of the whole event. Countless other souls, human and otherwise, are likewise parts of the same whole, each affected by every other, each *necessary* to every other for fulfillment of its dharma.

Nor can the radius of effects that flow from our acts be gauged. The flower, emanating its fragrance and charm, knows nought of the hearts it gladdens. The whippoorwill, singing its song at night, is totally unaware of the joy it brings to others. The whistle sounded from the mill at noon serves countless thousands in their walks through daily life, far beyond the purpose of its blowing. "Nor knowest thou what argument thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent. All are needed by each one; nothing is good and fair alone."

Unknown to ourselves, countless other souls are, by our deeds, helped or hindered in their progress through the path of life. Through failure to act at the appointed time, we ignore the law of Brotherhood, and miss an opportunity that "seldom the gods repeat." Ages may pass before the cycles bring back for our good the same assemblage of brother souls.

Performed at the proper time, the duties of life are accompanied by every element necessary for success. Performed out of time, nature responds but sluggishly. Consider the man who, in early years, neglected to learn the simple things appropriate to youth. He now finds it tenfold more difficult to master lessons that in proper season would have been no task at all. In keeping with the then fitness of things, he had the force and help of other souls who were similarly engaged, but who now have moved on to newer fields of duty. And in going back to regain that which was lost, he has to neglect present duties which were not his in early life.

But for him who serves the Law, the whole of nature makes obeisance. "All things work together for good to those who love the Lord (Law)," saith the ancient scripture. Friends, foes, the ignorant and the wise, the far and the near—even the powers of the air—take side with him who loves the Law. Apparent miracle is but the result of the co-ordinate action of the other souls who are karmic sharers in our fate.

Men seldom question the far-reaching effects of the tendency to procrastinate. From the smallest vice grows the most brutal crime. The selfish desire, for example, which moves a man to compete with his fellows, grows from the same plant as does outright theft. The feeling of revenge which any man harbors in his heart is not different in kind from stark murder. Both are from the same seed, the latter being merely the grown tree that has burst into lethal flower. In like manner, the tendency to put off, to do it at another time, is soon transformed into *neglect* to do the task at all. Neglect persistently followed changes into *heedlessness,* and heedlessness verily is death, says the wise man. He who deliberately ignores, or fails to *heed,* that which he sees to be true, creates for himself a future filled with darkness and despair.

Do we question at times the fitness of things and see no reason for the parts we play in the drama of life? Selfishly, perhaps, we have failed to view ourselves as aspects of a greater whole; we have thought of ourselves and the parts we play as unique, independent of all other actors upon the stage of life. The wise actor, who knows the meaning of life, looks for his place in relation to all others. He looks for his cue, the karmic indications, and when the time is ripe, acts without delay. Even the meanest duty, performed at the proper time, has a flavor that is joyous to the soul.

The drama of existence yields up its mystery to those who know the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, and of the golden precept that "Compassion is no attribute," but the "Law of LAWS."

# YOUTH-COMPANIONS' FORUM

EACH *period of evolution, large or small, begins with a review. If reviews are natural, why are Theosophists warned against looking back? "Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences," says The Voice of the Silence.*

(*a*) All cycles of evolution, large or small, begin with a review in order that the experiences and lessons of the past may be benefited from. This does not imply the dwelling on or lamenting over past mistakes, but rather the seeing of all past events in the right light, for "what they are worth" to the Soul. In that way the *inner* lesson may be gained from them. In a review of this nature, things are looked at in the proper perspective—impersonally.

It is not necessary to remember in detail the events presented by a review, but rather to carry with us the essential points and impressions that may be of value in facing future circumstances. Of course, the review is governed by the strongest impressions and impulses generated in the individual life or cycle being regarded. Those are mirrored most vividly.

At the moment of birth, the Ego is devoid of all personal attachments and its power as a perceiver and spectator is not hindered in any way. This is the only time in the life of ordinary humans that one is able to see in detail the causes for all the effects he must meet, whether pleasant or unpleasant. We have to purify our principles and instruments so that the clear perceptions of the soul can come through deliberately in waking consciousness. This would enable us to see all the angles of a situation at the moment of occurrence, not only in a review.

Mr. Judge sums up the pre-natal panorama in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 116), thus: "The Self . . . just before birth, . . . sees for a moment all the causes that led it to *devachan* and back to the life it is about to begin, and knowing it to be all just, to be the result of its own past life, it repines not but takes up the cross again—and another soul has come back to earth."

Each one is the embodiment of his whole past; therefore, the past should be considered only to the extent that it influences the present and the future. Regret over past actions is of no value in charting the future course of action. We must not merely "feel" about experiences, but understand them. One can review without regret, just as one can work hard for a cause, yet be without personal ambition.

(*b*) The review which occurs before a period of evolution is impersonal and comes before the ego is engrossed in his own separate identity. If one could look self-consciously upon these reviews, he would act taking into account his past mistakes and successes. This is regarding the review as a mental problem. However, looking back may, and in most cases does, take the form of an emotional barricade to progress which we build for ourselves by brooding over past mistakes or revelling in past accomplishments. When this personal attitude is assumed, review becomes dangerous since progress is stopped until one sees himself as apart from those experiences. It is impossible to live in both the past and present. We should learn to live only in the present, putting the knowledge from past experience into action. But if we live emotionally in the past, present duties are sure to be neglected.

There is a great difference between the two types of reviews. One takes place as an aid and guide for the present life while the other is an escape from the present life. Since we can *act* only in the present, it is naturally not a good policy to live in the past.

(*c*) In the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, we find that Orpheus was permitted to bring Eurydice to earth on the condition that he would not look back at her as she followed him. He did look back and she returned to life among the shades. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt because she looked back. In everyday life, the clinging to the past nullifies the possibilities of the present. Complete obsession by past memories produces insanity; the ego finally breaks away from an instrument which by its ceaseless dwelling on the past has become useless.

That past which we have left behind is a liability to the ego. The essence of the past is now part and parcel of the soul. Character is simply past experience which has become a permanent part of the ego. To retrace the steps of past failures means dragging the ego back to those previous conditions. Wherever our thoughts are, there are we.

The ego is unconcerned with the physical setting or personalities connected with past incidents. It cares only for the golden harvest of experience, of lessons learned. But in this age, when the form side of life is so highly valued, there is risk of becoming deluded and entangled in the empty forms, the Kama-rupas of the past; hence, the warning of the *Voice*. We appreciate only faintly the wisdom that prevents man from remembering the details of past incarnations. Were he to remember, he would be blighted by the curse of his own past, beset by regrets and chained to his previous actions.

Reviews occur at the beginning and at the close of each life and of all periods. In the first three and a half rounds of this globe, the teachings tell us, the lower kingdoms (not man) were engaged in re-enacting the evolutionary processes of previous cycles. In this period, evolution proceeds by "natural impulse" or the copying by the lower life of the patterns man made in the past. When this elemental life had brought the forms to the height reached in the former evolutionary period, then man comes upon the scene to undertake responsibility for evolution of another sort. Mr. Crosbie throws out a hint as to the real purpose of the review period which begins every cycle:

> The analogy of the *Secret Doctrine* shows that every change is preceded by a rapid rehearsal of previous processes in evolution. It seems to me that we might use this in our own mental processes and possibly might be able to figure out our position in the cycle. We might be able to let the mind *only* sweep over the preliminaries, and step in when the proper point is reached, using the *upward rush* as motive power. We should be rushing upward from new levels all the time.

(*d*) Theosophists are advised to review each day from the spiritual point of view. It is said that we should not regret, but should consider our mistakes for the lessons they contain. "On all planes 'memory' must be the power of reproducing past experience." But the morbid dwelling on the past is always unwholesome. This memory is of the lower Mind, which would cause us to relive our personal experiences by identifying ourselves with those events in memories. Memory, according to Mr. Judge, "continually presents pictures to Lower *Manas,* and the result is that the Higher is obscured." However, if one takes the position of the Perceiver or Ishwara, the spectator, he then views his experiences from the basis of the Higher Self and remains unmoved.

"One single thought about the past that thou hast left behind, will drag thee down and thou wilt have to start the climb anew. . . . Look not behind or thou art lost." A single glance at the past which he has left behind, which he has abandoned, might make of the disciple a despondent Arjuna, whose personal feelings would then sap the strength needed to finish the journey ahead. The wise man looks to the future.

*Is prophecy based entirely on the law of correspondence and analogy or is it a form of clairvoyance? How does the Theosophist account for the predictions of H. P. Blavatsky?*

(*a*) We know that Hydrogen and Oxygen will unite to form water. We can "prophesy" that under certain conditions such a reaction will take place because it has done so in the past and, the laws of Nature being constant, we know the experiment will be successful again. An advanced student in mathematics is often able to solve difficult problems without doing any work on paper. To a beginner this looks miraculous because for him there would be a series of many steps before the problem was solved. It is not that in the case of the advanced student the steps are omitted, but that they have become automatic.

H. P. B.'s predictions are based on universal law and there is nothing miraculous about them. She made them in the fullness of knowledge. It was as easy for Her to make prophecies about the coming centuries as it is for us to make prophecies about when the sun will come up, and the process is fundamentally the same. As we have watched the sun come up again and again, She and all great Adepts have watched the great cycles repeat themselves. We wonder what is meant by the statement that there is nothing new under the sun. They know what it means, and Their knowledge includes the times of the cycles and the manner in which the repetitions take place.

(*b*) "The law of Analogy is the first key to the world-problem, and these links have to be studied co-ordinately in their occult relations to each other." (*S. D.* I, 604.) "Real clairvoyance means the faculty of seeing through the densest matter, . . . and irrespective of time (past, present and future) or distance." (*Glossary,* p. 85.)

Madame Blavatsky declared the law of Analogy to be the *first* key. Because there are other keys it is doubtful if the prophecies of H. P. B. were based wholly on the law of analogy. As to clairvoyance, she herself stated that "no such metaphysical belief is claimed as our chief dependence," and that "there is no psychic phenomenon involved. It is neither *prevision, nor prophecy;* no more than is the signalling of a comet or star, several years before its appearance. It is simply knowledge and mathematically correct computations which enable the WISE MEN OF THE EAST to foretell," etc. (*S. D.* I, 646.)

*It is said that we should not be anxious about our progress. Does this imply that we should take time from Theosophical duties for the customary duties and pleasures of life?*

*Light on the Path* says: "Kill out the hunger for growth." Some, perhaps, have taken this to mean that all desire for progress should be abandoned and that we should just take what comes to us. The emphasis, however, is on *hunger,* not on *growth.* It is the hunger,

the selfish desire for benefit to oneself only, that should be killed. A little further on the same book says (p. 5):

> Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air. So must you press forward to open your soul to the eternal. But it must be the eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth. For in the one case you develop in the luxuriance of purity, in the other you harden by the forcible passion for personal stature.

The duties of a theosophist become clear with the true idea of progress in mind. He does all he can in theosophical work, but is not concerned with whatever results may come to him. It is the progress of others that is important; individual progress will take care of itself when one works for others. The only reason a theosophist thinks about his own condition is that he may increase his usefulness in theosophical work for humanity. The exact methods of applying these principles must differ with every man. It would be wrong for one to tell another what to do in every circumstance of life, for karma is different with each individual, and what might be right for one is often wrong for another.

There is no real difference between theosophical and other duties. All *duty* is theosophical. Every duty—family, national, or individual—should be a theosophical duty; it is the greatest mistake to separate our personal from our theosophical life. Under conditions in Kali Yuga, however, various duties seem to conflict. It is high time that theosophists right modern misconceptions and show that real pleasure comes from living the theosophical life and aiding in theosophical work. If personal matters seem to interfere, then perhaps we may learn something of the meaning of the phrase "checked by Karma," and work through these obstacles and delays cheerfully. This course then becomes the fulfillment of our highest theosophical duty.

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## "I AM I"

"I am I." I know it. Take away my "organization," cast my body to the crows or the devil, logically or physically, strip me of all which makes me palpable to you, and to the universe, still I have the unconquerable knowledge that "I am I," and must and shall be so for ever. How I get this idea I know not: but it is the most precious of all convictions, as it is the first.—CHARLES KINGSLEY.

# TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

WHEN a man determines to guide himself by the principle that life is a school, and that all its experiences are opportunities for learning, he thereby undertakes the real responsibilities of soul-evolution. It may be lifetimes before the *full* extent of these obligations is realized, and certain it is that not a little time will pass before he has the practical knowledge needed to participate deliberately in the *new order* of experience which begins to be his. Life, as with all arts, demands a conscious skill of its devotees. To help nature and work on with her is not a thing lightly undertaken nor easily accomplished.

In illustration, consider the rarity of true teachers. Yet everyone who recognizes that life is a school has sooner or later to constitute himself a teacher. The teacher is an adept in playing the part of nature; he is, in his full stature, the earthly proxy of divinity, from whom the learner may absorb the distillate of universal experience. The teacher, insofar as he teaches truly, must leave behind all personal bias or eccentricity. Effective instruction in a universal law permits no swerving from the impartiality characteristic of principles. The teacher strives to make himself a true representation of the macrocosm in the microcosm. If the sole design of Nature can be expressed in the words, "Let me bring about the soul's experience," then the purpose of the Teacher must be to reveal the *meaning* of the experiences which Nature brings to the soul.

How different from ordinary communications among men is the attitude which assumes that all human relations are for teaching and learning! Nor is there occasion for pride in the assumption that we can "teach." If no experience comes to man except as something he can learn from, then each one of us carries a wealth of instruction to everyone else he knows. Deliberate teaching as a didactic activity is not an essential part of this calling. A genius might learn from the modesty of a lesser intellect supported by a greater integrity. A modest man respects the knowledge he has; he pretends to nothing, for why should he debase the truth already his by covering his ignorance with the tints of assurance? Who will dare claim that honesty above the "commercial" standard is wasted in a world of competition and vicious self-interest?—that the example of integrity is lost upon the modern business man? To teach is not to preach; this delusion has haunted the western mind too long, and it is time we throw off the *skandhas* of sectarianism. The fact that religion is

known to us chiefly in pious phrases is an excellent reason for using them not at all in talking about Theosophy; or rather, for avoiding phrases which suggest the theological approach to moral problems.

A vital part of the teacher's art is the ability to present fresh viewpoints, to call attention to old truths in terms that correlate with life—not in abstractions that have lost their vivid meaning through centuries of scholastic manipulation. The modern man laughs in the face of the evangelist who naïvely urges that it is wrong to "sin." And in a way, the modern man is right. Ethically speaking, the Christian evangelist is still somewhere in the third round of his Manasic development. "Sin" no longer has validity as a category of moral action. Moral discourse requires the use of symbols that have some living relation to present experience; all else is sound and fury, signifying nothing.

The man who feels himself at a loss for things to say to others about Theosophy needs to give some thought to the work of the teacher. First of all, the teacher has to understand in some measure the mind of the students he proposes to assist. In the case of the ordinary man, the general information and habits of thought common to the times must be known to one who would be of use in spreading true ideas. These familiar lines of thought are the raw materials of the teacher.

Unfortunately, familiar ideas are very often mistaken ones which the teacher has to correct. This he does by leading the student to see his mistake for himself. The *mis*-conception is an idea or a group of ideas which is incorrectly connected with some fact. If the teacher can draw the attention of the learner to the *fact,* so that it is seen in the light of direct perception, then the learner may make a great discovery: he may himself perceive the distortion which caused his error; he may realize that a long line of other misconceptions remains to be corrected—erroneous ideas which were logical consequences of the initial mistake. Then he may set to work to examine his mind in terms of the new knowledge and to make corrections himself.

In this way the teacher has played the part of "Karma" to the learner, in the only way that one has the right to be a "karmic agent" voluntarily. He has helped a younger brother to see reality as it is—to participate in the broader vision of one who has had greater experience. Both Nature and the Sage are Teachers, but Nature teaches solely by particular *re*-action—Nature is made up of nothing else—while the Sage directs the attention of the learner to the universal. The teacher would have you forget both him and yourself in contemplation of the truth.

Nature has no favorites, so that the teacher swayed by personal preference is unable to reflect the universal order. How can the universal find expression through an individual unless that one assumes a universal view? The parent who allows his child to mature in the delusion that *his* family, his caste, nation or race, is something apart from and better than the rest, has taught a falsehood that may be erased, perhaps, only through the agony of *lives*. The parent thought that "love" made him foster a tradition of arrogance and pride, but the love which belies the greater law of unity must always find its balance in the hate of those who were excluded from that partial affection. Who teaches a partial love, a personal allegiance and a lesser loyalty, teaches hate, denial, and breaking faith with all the rest. This is a bitter truth, but how else shall mankind be aroused from the exclusions practiced so readily and with so light a heart? It seems a simple lesson—that we have not to love our friends the less, but all the others more—yet love in most of our practical definitions would claim this teaching an impossible contradiction.

The duty of the mother to child is primarily that of a teacher. If obedience is demanded simply because *She*, the Mother, requires it, then the child will probably develop the sort of mentality and psychic nature which supports the Catholic Church. Such a mother trains her child to look to a *person* for guidance and instruction instead of his own understanding of the principles of things. The wise parent will always strive to have the child perceive an impersonal reason for right action. Here, of course, as in all else, there must be common sense. One does not "reason" with a two-year-old who is in danger. Nevertheless, the whole art of parenthood, insofar as the Manasic development of children is concerned, lies in the ability to direct the guidance, and finally even the allegiance, of the child-mind from the personal to the rational, in progressive transfer as the faculties of rational perception emerge and become active. The mother should long for the day when her suzerainty over the child shall end; when he undertakes his own responsibilities and begins to fabricate his own destiny. Only to the parent with a secret wish to play Jehovah in the home is the severing of this psychic umbilicus painful.

The parent, like the teacher, should mirror Nature, and Nature demands of all offspring that they fend for themselves when maturity is reached. Rendered into terms of psychic and moral evolution, this means that when a youth reaches the age of responsibility he must begin choosing for himself. Sooner or later, every man

must stand on his own feet. Who deceives his fellows by giving unnatural aid when the time has come for *self*-support does disservice to those he loves. It should be clear that every really educative influence has its fulfillment only when the student begins to stand alone. Every phase of human life, from cradle to grave, or better still, from birth to birth, might be best defined in terms of degrees of increasing independence. What is initiation, if not the testing of one's moral independence—his *spiritual* equilibrium? What probation, unless a period of introductory trial, overseen with watchful care by teacher—a cycle prior to the ultimate testing when the disciple must stand absolutely alone?

The successful teacher is at the same time the perfect learner. The impersonality which makes his teaching effective also opens the door of his own understanding. The motive which directs his energies in the service of others forges for him a link with the wisdom of all those who labor for universal brotherhood. The way to test oneself for this attitude and purpose is quite simple. It is done by asking—How do I regard the people I know and meet, intimately or casually? Do I think of how they will further my ends, or how I may serve their needs? These are uncomplicated questions, better answered by reflecting on one's feeling than from analysis of ideas held. They cannot embarrass one who endeavors to be a true teacher.

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## THE MORAL SENSE

One can no more rid himself of the notion of moral obligation than of that of time or space; and as surely as we must resign ourselves to walking before we know how to define this space through which we move and this time that measures our movements, so surely must we submit to moral obligation before having put our finger on its deep-hidden roots. Moral law dominates man, whether he respects or defies it. See how it is in every-day life; each one is ready to cast his stone at him who neglects a plain duty, even if he allege that he has not yet arrived at philosophic certitude. Everybody will say to him, and with excellent reason: "Sir, we are men before everything. First play your part, do your duty as citizen, father, son; after that you shall return to the course of your meditations."—CHARLES WAGNER.

# IS OUR FATE PREDESTINED?

HEAVILY encrusted with the dust of a scholastic age, the word "predestination" emerges in modern terminology chiefly through courtesy of encyclopedias and seldom ventures forth to mingle with utilitarian scientific phrases. Its genealogy reveals a former influential position in Catholic theology under the guise of God's perfect foreknowledge, and an open and autocratic rule in the explicit predestination of John Calvin. Today, like many intellectual relics, it is formally forgotten, while its progeny thrive in the modern climate of opinion. Men are no longer thought to be predestined by the infinite wisdom of their creator, but rather by the dual deities of materialism, "heredity and environment"—all-powerful abstractions of psychology and sociology. The social historian, also, offers only a more inclusive development of the heredity-environment thesis—men become what they are because of the dominant social and political forces of the day. Christianity and Scientific Rationalism, theoretically opposing each other at every turn, finally join hands in acceptance of practical fatalism. In point of verifiable fact, Theosophy represents the only philosophical tradition upholding with logic the view that man is indeed the master of his own fate.

Christianity has long been defended by the sentimental for its "insistence upon the sanctity of the individual," yet nothing has done more to foster the belief in human insignificance than the thinly veiled dogma of external creation and control. The derivation of man from an *outside* cause, whether "divine" or material, either has no existence in fact or else holds true for all men at all times; this belief, therefore, is in absolute contradiction to the view that human beings may become through *their own* efforts something more than a bundle of very apparent human weaknesses. Unless those weaknesses simply represent evolutionary obstacles in the continuing development of the individual, the whole of existence becomes a hollow mockery and hope lies dead.

Save for temporary bursts of emotional enthusiasm, the twentieth century is an age of dead hopes. The perfect social order once predicted by optimistic "scientific" oracles has faded before the devastating onslaught of modern warfare. The social roots of world-wide militarism also bear witness to the fact that men lacking spiritual and moral aspiration will seize upon whatever type of material improvement is offered, regardless of moral considerations. When they

no longer feel that this world can be trusted as a world of purpose, intrinsically just, they will live and die according to the amoral "struggle for survival."

What meaning for the common man have the endless theological debates on predestination? Practically speaking, none; yet this question, when shorn of its scholastic veils, becomes the most fundamental issue to be faced by every human being. Reduced to its essential bearing on human hopes and aspirations, the question becomes: "Am I the product of circumstances, divine or material, over which I have no control?" If the answer is in the affirmative, but one logical conclusion can be drawn—that the battles which the noblest of men fight for their ideals are but quixotic futilities; that the clamor of these struggles will resound in eternity as nothing more than empty echoes. If indeed the material alone is real, physical causation is the determinant of character and self. If man may not choose his own course of action, his own heights to scale, there can be little incentive for any action beyond the quest for mere physical needs.

The paradox of "fate and free will" must be resolved by each individual before he can either accept or reject the matter of his own moral responsibility. The solution requires both an empirical approach to experience and the rightful use of metaphysics. Metaphysics is not an alien word to Western ears, but it is an alien science. Metaphysical study involves the correlative use of both reason and intuition, and while Christianity effectively curtailed the sphere of reason, scientific rationalism refuses any validity to intuition.

Profound questions may best be approached in simple terms. Simple terms stand for fundamental realities, and it is from the primary facts of physical, mental and moral experience that Theosophy approaches the problem of fate and free will. The majority of men have always felt that life holds purpose and enduring values, that immortality must be a fact in an understandable universe. They have felt also in an inner and mysterious way their own source in "the inexhaustible spring of eternity," yet they have allowed philosophers and theologians to rationalize these feelings into the category of "psychological delusions," or religious dogmas. Were men to become their own metaphysicians, it would not be impossible for each to determine something of the nature and extent of free will.

It is undeniably true that every man finds himself influenced by both external and internal conditions—factors seemingly beyond his control. Physical disease and mental incapacity are but two of the most common of such obstacles. It is also true that each can in his

own life observe an exact chain of causation leading from prior action to present results. To this extent he knows that *he* has made his life what it now is. H. P. Blavatsky has graphically expressed the extent to which each man determines his own fate. She wrote: "We cut these numerous windings in our destinies daily with our own hands while we stand bewildered before the mystery of our own making and the riddles of life that *we will not* solve, and then accuse the great Sphinx of devouring us." If there is any justice in nature, and if immortality be true, the chain of causation representing the individual choices of every being must stretch across the gap between death and birth. Present handicaps must represent past weaknesses which have left an indelible impress upon human character, an impress which can only be effaced by a further transformation—by different use of the will.

Turning again to the reservoir of common experience, it is clear that no tragedy determines one's fate—destiny is determined by the attitude of mind held in regard to suffering and disappointment. Failure and suffering, far more than success and satisfaction, have made men stronger, possessed of wider vision and knowledge. The source of black despair to one becomes high challenge to another. Men of great character are those able to see in every event, whether favorable or unfavorable, but another form of *opportunity*. May there not be opportunities of soul development in the types of suffering we have drawn to ourselves by self-engendered weaknesses? May not it be, also, that lessons thus learned are the most necessary in the long pilgrimage of evolution? Justice on this view becomes less of the incomprehensible variety distributed by God, and yet, conversely, not a purely relative matter. According to the teachings of Theosophy, justice is but the natural reaction to disturbance of harmony among the hosts of evolving beings, beings whose interdependence forms the pattern of evolution. What conception of justice recommends itself more easily to reason and intuition?

It follows, then, that we carry with us not only the results of our own past weaknesses, but as well the burden of responsibility to other forms of life. Our own progress is limited through that responsibility, although this "limitation" is the very essence of co-operative evolution. Finally, man can be "free" only when he has fathomed the extent of his interdependence, for interdependence is the order of nature—an order which makes possible the very physical body we inhabit with its endless varieties of co-operative intelligence. It must be, too, that man, as a self-conscious soul, bears a special burden, for within him is the power to influence towards progression

or retrogression the whole assemblage of beings who are as yet without the power of self-directing will.

The personalities of all men are in need of improvement. That is, attached to every human being are forms of life continually expressing habits with which we have *im*pressed them. Those habits of the body, emotional nature and mind suggest to the choosing self various "lines of least resistance." These habits may be either useful or detrimental, and it is we who must either retain or transform them. Habits "predestine" *us* until the will in man is aroused to predestine *them*.

The truly spiritual being is subject to no grooves of habitual action. Our will is constantly used in opposition, not to "the order of nature," as some philosophers have expansively remarked, but in opposition to elements of our own nature. Will may be regarded as "the force of spirit in action." It reaches its highest potency in the service of moral (spiritual) causes, thus transcending the limitations of whatever tendencies bind men to habits of the past.

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## THE DYING KING CYRUS, TO HIS CHILDREN

"Do not believe, my dear children, that when I shall have quitted you I shall be nowhere and no more *(nunquam aut nullum fore)*. While I was with you you did not see my soul; you only comprehended by my actions that this body was animated by one. I have never been able to persuade myself that souls that live while in mortal bodies, when they leave them die. I cannot believe that they lose all intelligence in quitting bodies that are essentially destitute of intelligence. When death disunites the human frame, we clearly see what becomes of its material parts; they apparently return to the several elements out of which they were composed; but the soul continues to remain invisible, both while present in the body and when it leaves it.

"You know, my children, that *nothing more resembles death than sleep;* and the sleep of souls chiefly proclaims their divinity, for many of them foresee the future and show what they will become when they shall be freed from the prison of the body."—XENOPHON, in Cicero's *De Senectute*.

# ON THE LOOKOUT

## Quest For Unity

An epochal meeting of some five hundred leaders in science, religion and philosophy took place at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York on Sept. 9, 10 and 11. This conference had the avowed purpose of bringing together the various fields of human knowledge which, during centuries of intellectual development in the west, have become widely separated. Among the participants were Nobel Prize winners, college presidents, and eminent representatives of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths. As president of the Seminary which acted as host to this distinguished gathering, Dr. Louis Finkelstein opened the conference with a statement of its objective: to bring to modern thought the rational ordering that is needed to maintain the free unity of democracy, as distinguished from the ordering by force which prevails in lands where democracy no longer exists. Defining the problem in a sentence, he said:

> Our inability to transmit our individual integrations of science, philosophy and religion, in their relation to traditional values and the democratic way of life, has been catastrophic for our institutions and our civilization. (New York *Times,* Sept. 10.)

The conference, he hoped, would establish "a consensus, recognizing the independent reliability of theology, philosophy and science, in their respective fields."

## The Results

After three days of deliberation, the conferees announced the measure of their success:

> In their judgment, the greatest achievement of this first conference was the demonstration that they could come together not merely for the purpose of expressing their individual minds, but also in a willingness to change their minds—at least in their attitudes toward each other.
>
> As evidence of this emergent democratic toleration, they announced that theologians at this conference recognized the right of science in its own field to insist that truth was only what could be verified experimentally. The scientists, for their part, "seemed to recognize" the right of the theologians to speculate in a field that the theologians described as transcending experimentation. . . .
>
> Theologians and scientists alike insisted, however, that this democratic toleration was achieved "without compromising convictions." The theologians rested on a formal declaration that the scientific

demand for experimental proof had no application in the religious field. The scientists, for their part, declared the product of unverifiable theological speculations could not be termed knowledge.

While possibly a victory for etiquette, the fact that scientists and theologians, "instead of parting violently on these last reservations," made plans for another meeting, can hardly be regarded as a monumental advance in philosophical and ethical unity. In fact, the substance of the addresses made during the conference suggests quite other conclusions. Some statements from the various speakers, selected for their summarizing value from reports in the New York *Times* of Sept. 10, 11 and 12, will illustrate the difficulties involved.

## "ABANDON PERSONAL GOD"—EINSTEIN

For the theosophist, the address of Dr. Albert Einstein far transcended in value anything else that was said. It was, however, something of a bombshell to the happy harmony of the theologians for them to learn from him that "the main source of the present-day conflicts between the spheres of religion and science lies in this concept of a personal God."

> The more a man is imbued with the ordered regularity of all events [Prof. Einstein continued], the firmer becomes his conviction that there is no room left by the side of this ordered regularity for causes of a different nature. For him, neither the rule of human nor the rule of Divine Will exists as an independent cause of natural events.
>
> To be sure, the doctrine of a personal God interfering with natural events could never be refuted in the real sense by science, for this doctrine can always take refuge in those domains in which scientific knowledge has not yet been able to set foot. But I am persuaded that such behavior on the part of the representatives of religion would not only be unworthy but also fatal.
>
> For a doctrine which is able to maintain itself, not in clear light, but only in the dark, will of necessity lose its effect on mankind with incalculable harm to human progress.

## "THE GOOD, THE TRUE, AND THE BEAUTIFUL"

> In their struggle for the ethical good, teachers of religion must have the stature to give up the doctrine of a personal God—that is, give up that source of fear and hope which in the past placed such vast power in the hands of priests. In their labors they will have to avail themselves of those forces which are capable of cultivating the Good, the True and the Beautiful in Humanity itself. That is, to be sure, a more difficult but an incomparably more worthy task.

> The further the spiritual evolution of mankind advances, the more certain it seems to me that the path to genuine religiosity does not lie through the fear of life and the fear of death and blind faith, but through striving after rational knowledge. In this sense, I believe that the priest must become a teacher if he wishes to do justice to his lofty educational mission.

In these days, when Democracy is being falsely identified with Christian tradition, it requires intellectual courage to attack the key idea of western theology. Separation of church and state is, in America, an unaccomplished ideal. Instead of praising Dr. Einstein's integrity in refusing to compromise with theology, a national news magazine degraded its pages with the gratuitous observation that "Einstein's message was the only false note of the entire conference." Actually, it was the only *true* note struck of any importance. Dr. Einstein confessed he had little hope of uniting his hearers "even to a slight extent"—a belief with which the Catholic speaker who followed emphatically agreed!

## Thomist Views

Prof. Mortimer Adler of the University of Chicago, scholarly follower of Thomas Aquinas, asserted that America is more menaced by the disorderly thinking in modern universities than by European aggression. Alleging his belief that democracy is "the most perfect form of the political community," he added that "one cannot have reasons for affirming democracy and at the same time deny the truths of philosophy and religion." But *which* truths? Prof. Sidney Hook of New York University was of the opinion that the expressions of Prof. Adler were "categorically false." Jacques Maritain, French exponent of Thomism, said that "an education in which science took precedence over philosophy and theology was already potentially a Fascist education." One wonders what M. Maritain would say to the historical facts assembled by George Seldes in *The Catholic Crisis,* a book which points out in great detail the reactionary or Fascist trend in the Catholic Church, rather than a counter movement toward Democracy.

Prof. Douglas C. Macintosh of Yale held that the "plain man . . . needs a theology which will formulate the convictions of a spiritually stimulating and reasonable faith and that will contain at the heart of it a nucleus of *verified empirical knowledge*"! Harry Overstreet, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy of City College of New York, suggested that we think of "God as love." "As long as we think God is a person," he said, "we can easily hypnotize ourselves into inactive

adoration." In a sentence, Prof. Overstreet here explained the medieval withdrawal into monasteries and the quietistic tendency of thousands of Christian mystics. But if God is "Love," logic requires a Devil to account for the existence of Hate.

## "God Is Love"

On the second day of the conference, Dr. Finkelstein expressed surprise that "Prof. Einstein should give such an absolute judgment in a field that was philosophical and theological in character," arguing that "he [Einstein] should realize that he must speak with as much reserve in these fields as he habitually does in his own field of natural science." Have, then, only theologians the right to speak authoritatively of Deity? Dr. Einstein simply stated the view of most of the scientists present, as expressions of opinion subsequently showed. Other theological addresses, the *Times* reports, associated religion with the traditional Bible God.

Dr. William E. Ritter, zoologist of the University of California, explained how the Darwinian theory of evolution—which "nearly everybody" now accepts—had brought him to adopt Spinoza's conception of Deity—a God identical with nature. Religion, according to Prof. Philipp Frank of Harvard, may be permitted to do only what science is unable to do—to establish individual and social goals. Prof. Paul Weiss of Bryn Mawr offered a "new proof" of God's existence: "I persist, therefore, God exists. From this follows the corrollary: God exists, therefore I am immortal." Prof. F. Ernest Johnson of the Columbia Teachers College said that the divorce of religion and education must be disastrous to both and urged that "public education in America should be informed with the faith of the Hebrew-Christian tradition to which our culture owes so much—not sectarian teaching but a religious orientation."

## Contested "Authority"

Commenting on the progress of the conference, the New York *Times* observed editorially:

> The scientists, philosophers and theologians of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths remained preoccupied with the relative positions of their own specialties and beliefs—notably on the proposition that the authority of science ranked below that of philosophy, which in turn ranked below theology.

To this may be added the just comment of Prof. Adler:

> Since professors come to a conference of this sort with the intention of speaking their minds but not of changing them, with a willingness to listen but not to learn, with the kind of tolerance which delights in a variety of opinions and abominates the unanimity of agreement, it is preposterous to suppose that this conference can even begin to realize the only ends which justify the enterprise.

Thus, as an attempt to agree on the philosophic verities which should form the foundation for a free society, the conference was a miserable failure, degenerating into a series of claims to final authority with no common ground for mutual understanding and agreement. While Prof. Einstein's declaration regarding the personal God idea may be taken as a necessary step in the negative sense, this declaration became the focus of disunion for the conference as a whole. No real synthesis of science, religion and philosophy is possible on the basis of the personal God idea; true unity will remain an impossible ideal until this false conception is abandoned.

## Iconoclasm Barren

Even then, more than negation is necessary. Thoughtful men everywhere must come to recognize the existence of a philosophy which is at once a science and a religion; a science which is both philosophical and religious, and a religion founded on science and philosophy. This is Theosophy. Some words of a Great Teacher of Theosophy are directly applicable to the impasse reached in their deliberations by our modern scientists, theologians and philosophers:

> The era of blind faith is gone; that of inquiry is here. Inquiry that only unmasks error, without discovering anything upon which the soul can build, will but make iconoclasts. Iconoclasm, from its very destructiveness, can give nothing; it can only raze. But man cannot rest satisfied with bare negation. Agnosticism is but a temporary halt. This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must come, and which will push the age towards extreme atheism, or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans. (Theosophy XXI, 495.)

## Statistics of Alcoholism

The urgent necessity of finding a constructive solution to the alcohol problem is recognized by Dr. J. L. Henderson in an article in *California and Western Medicine* for January.

> As an indication of the recent increase of alcoholism [he writes], the statistics of one life insurance company indicate that, in 1932, 11.9 persons of every one hundred applying for life insurance were

rejected because of "heavy alcoholic indulgence." In 1936 this figure had increased to 33.7 of every one hundred such persons, an increase of 183 per cent in four years. The Department of Psychiatry of Bellevue Hospital, New York City, treats one thousand alcoholic patients a month; and the director, Dr. Karl Bowman, points out that temporary treatment by fines and jail sentences does not cure this condition. It is impossible to estimate the enormous economic loss involved. But more important, and as impossible to evaluate, is the human misery and suffering brought on the drinker himself, on his family, and his friends. Even more appalling is the deleterious effect upon the personality formation of the children of alcoholic parents.

## EFFECT OF "CIVILIZATION"

Dr. Henderson observes that "the problem seems to be more widespread where the cultural requirements are exacting. Thus, it would seem to be an effect of the progress of civilization, dependent upon the inability of certain persons to meet its requirements." He points out that an effective and permanent cure can only come when the basic causes which lead a man to drink are understood. He believes that with the aid of the psychiatrist, an understanding of personality structure has been achieved which opens "an approach to the problem that holds a promise of consistent benefit."

## PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSIS

The psychiatrist is primarily interested in the "personality" of the alcoholic, for there, he thinks, the basic weakness is to be found. Dr. Henderson enumerates the reasons why the alcoholic drinks:

> (1) To be a "he man" and compensate for his feeling of inadequacy—He needs a lift to help him meet first the unusual, later the ordinary requirements of life. This gives us a hint of the deep-lying, ever-present feeling of inadequacy, so intolerable to him that he has never admitted it even to himself, but has, on the contrary drowned it in alcohol. (2) to find a way of rebelling and allowing relief of his destructive impulses; and (3) to obtain pleasure. . . . The one relief he knows is through drinking. But why should he have a desire to rebel and destroy, which puts him both in need of and in fear of punishment? Obviously, it is because of a personality defect. It appears that, emotionally, he is a child. . . . If he is a child, he will, of course feel inadequate and inferior. In a man's world he will fail despite his intellectual ability, which is frequently above the average. . . . Situations which require his continued attempt at adult responsibility terrify him. Life becomes a nightmare in which he must destroy or be destroyed. The key

> to the entire situation is the cause of his fear and inadequacy, of his remaining emotionally a child. . . . The problem then develops into treating, not a man, but a child, who in his struggle to be a man, feels inadequate, bewildered and resentful, and who is still extremely susceptible to the passive pleasures of childhood.

## Problem in Character

Dr. Henderson sums up:

> The alcoholic's basic difficulty is not alcohol, but emotional immaturity, and treatment in order to be effective must be built upon this principle. The growing-up process in the alcoholic is accomplished through the close personal relationship that is established between him and his physician, and the gradual interpretation of this relationship as it shifts with his various emotional development. . . . There is probably no more complex pattern in the universe, certainly no one with as many variable possibilities as the human personality.

Such knowledge includes much more than psychiatry, however; it involves all the fundamental problems of philosophy, and one may legitimately question whether the physician is really qualified to deal with all the "variable possibilities" of the human personality. There being no broadly acceptable theory of the human psyche available in modern medical practice, the personal relationship treatment advocated by Dr. Henderson may turn out rather hazardously for the patient. If the doctor, for example, should make no conscientious effort to awaken the patient's desire to face his difficulties, then the basic "inadequacy" and "emotional immaturity" will remain unchanged. But if the physician has an intuitive understanding of "personality" in its relation to the *inner* man, he will perhaps be able to arouse the patient's *will.*

Except for the beneficent influence that every physician of strong character may exert on his patients, the modern doctor has little to offer the alcoholic. For this reason, the importance of a practical philosophy of life cannot be over-estimated. By a knowledge of Karma and reincarnation, the patient may be brought to see that his "unpleasant" circumstances are a result of his *own* action, that responsibilities can never be dismissed by temporary forgetfulness brought about by an external agent; that drinking is fundamentally a device of the weak who lack the courage to face reality. He would know, also, that within himself lies latent the power to overcome the habit of drink, as every other wrong tendency.

## SHOULD THE SCHOOLS TEACH SEX?

In *Liberty* for Sept. 14, Ann L. Crockett discusses this important question from the basis of practical teaching experience. Over-zealous professional educators have for many years been hinting that teachers are far better equipped to deal with the work of child-orientation than the majority of parents. Miss Crockett uses sound common sense to explode this theory in its relation to the proposed school-room discussions of sex. Summarizing the ideas behind the campaign for sex-education, she says:

> At a teachers' meeting recently I heard a prominent educator declare that, in an ideal situation the role of parents would be confined to begetting children and rearing them until the age of three, that all further training of the child would be in the hands of experts in the schools.
>
> This, I admit, is a rather extreme view, even for a professional educator; yet, in my fifteen years of teaching in public high schools, I've noted an alarming tendency of the schools to usurp, unbidden, the privileges of parenthood. . . . Given a teacher, a textbook, and a pupil, school administrators consider that—presto!—learning will take place. . . . And, a parent, no matter how thoughtful or wise, cannot possibly do better than turn over to the schools the biological entity known as a child. Just feed him, clothe him, get him to school on time; the teachers will do the rest.

## OMNIPOTENT PSYCHOLOGISTS

These beliefs indicate the persuasive influence of modern psychology and sociology, wherein the behavioristic "conditioning of the environment" theory plays such a large part. At the present time the majority of teachers' colleges in large universities operate in conjunction with the psychology department. Often a "psychology major" for two years is required before direct work can be undertaken in the school of education. In consequence, many high school teachers themselves offer the most convincing proofs of the behavorist thesis, for their intellectual "conditioning" has given rise to the many mistaken applications of progressivism which are the despair of thoughtful and more experienced educators.

The demand for sex education in the public schools as an antidote to teen-age promiscuity has grown apace with the curious idea that teachers trained in matters of psychology and biology know far more about the welfare of school children than their parents. Miss Crockett continues with a display of justifiable indignation:

> Some of the modern educators' ideas are harmless enough. But when they propose to introduce sex education into the public schools, when they brazenly assume omnipotence in all fields of emotion as well as knowledge, I cannot refrain from protesting against their unimaginative blundering.

Miss Crockett reviews the usual statistical arguments for sex education, and gives several startling examples of delinquency. She then turns to the *cause* of these conditions:

> What do these statistics, these deplorable cases show? Do they *prove* that there is a need for sex education in the schools, for enlightenment as to the facts of life? I flatly refuse to admit that they do. They prove merely that, among millions of high-school youngsters, there are some who lack a proper sense of moral values, of personal restraint. In no case from my school—and I've known of dozens—*was the offender ignorant of the consequences of the sexual act.*

## The Practical Problem

Miss Crockett commends a movement recently inaugurated by members of a Parent-Teachers' Association. These mothers decided that if there is to be any "sex education," it should be supplied by the parents. They instituted regular P.-T. A. meetings for instruction of the *parents* rather than the children. Supporting this solution of the problem, Miss Crockett points out that there is no *one* underlying sex problem for all students in a given age-group or class, but rather an individual problem for each child, and, furthermore, that no teacher is aware of enough factors in the individual child's development to enable a wise presentation of the subject of sex. There is great danger, she cautions, in speaking indiscriminately of such matters to children whose minds are not yet questioning in this direction. She feels that the whole argument for extensive sex education in the schools stems from the naïve belief that a high rate of promiscuity results from sexual ignorance, whereas, in point of fact, precisely the reverse is true. From the standpoint of Theosophy, the decision of many adolescents to live their own lives according to purely animal desires is but a natural outcome of the prevailing materialistic philosophy. When parents themselves can offer to their children a philosophy of life containing supporting reasons for moral conduct, then, and then only, can the young be expected to adopt a wholesome attitude toward this great problem. (Other phases of the question of sex education were discussed in Lookout for September, 1939, Theosophy XXVII, 518-22.)

## UNIFIED ATOMIC AND CELL THEORY

The general philosophical importance of current research in the field of viruses receives attention in an editorial in the A. M. A. *Journal* for January 27. Referring to the discoveries of W. M. Stanley of the Rockefeller Foundation, the writer points out that some viruses are larger than accepted living organisms, while others are smaller than certain protein molecules. The distinction is not of kind but of degree: The smallest virus, a tiny nucleoprotein molecule, and the largest of living organisms are both members of a common series in which there is almost imperceptible gradation of substance and of function. The properties of the virus, whatever their size, are a result of their structure; thus—

> According to Stanley there is no reason, from the point of view of structure, why a single structural entity which is called a molecule should not be larger than the ordered group of structural entities which is called a cell. This investigator is likewise of the opinion that both the cell theory and the atomic theory should be used to define accepted orders of structure and that neither should be handicapped by reference to the living state. Indeed, the transition between these accepted orders of structure may be so gradual that the designation of intervening entities as cells or molecules may be a matter of choice. It is furthermore reasonable to believe that the nature of the bonds between units within cells, as well as the nature of the bonds which hold together the large nucleoprotein, does not differ fundamentally from forces which are already known to exist in atoms.
>
> The venturesome conception of Stanley leads to a blending of the atomic theory, the germ theory and the cell theory into a unified philosophy, the essence of which is structure or architecture. According to this hypothesis the chemical, biologic and physical properties of matter are directly dependent on structure, whether the matter consist of atoms, molecules, germs or cells. Thus the structure of the virus entities would be held responsible for their remarkable properties.

## MORE SIMPLY—

In other words, the substance of nature is basically the same, whether regarded in its atomic, molecular or cellular forms. Dr. Stanley thinks the study of structural entities should not be "handicapped" by reference to a living state. From this view theosophists differ only verbally; they prefer to suggest that the study of living things should not be handicapped by reference to a non-existent

"dead" state. The "Science and the Secret Doctrine" article in THEOSOPHY for October gives comprehensive treatment of this question, in terms of the most recent development in biologic science. Dr. Stanley's views are in virtual accord with the occult doctrine that human and animal bodies, plants and stones are all built up of living units, many of them so small as to be beyond reach of the most powerful microscope. "It [occultism] says: Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant, and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle—whether you call it organic or inorganic—*is a life.*" (*S. D.* I, 261.)

FIRST BACTERIOLOGIST

The modern science of bacteriology had its beginning in the work of Ferdinand Cohn, a German plant physiologist, who undertook systematic investigation of the microbe world in 1851. Cohn's classification of plant micro-organisms according to their forms (cocci, bacteria, bacilli, vibrios, spirochetes, etc.,) is still in use. He also was the discoverer of the spore form of bacteria which is able to survive conditions which make life impossible for the bacterium proper—"one of the most important observations in the plant physiology." A passage from Cohn's famous paper, "Bacteria, the Smallest of Living Things," quoted in the A. M. A. *Journal* for Nov. 11, 1939, describes the cycle of organic life:

> The whole arrangement of nature is based on this, that the body in which life has been extinguished succumbs to dissolution in order that its material may become again serviceable to new life. If the amount of material which can be molded into living beings is limited on the earth, the same particles of material must ever be converted from dead into living bodies in an eternal circle; if the wandering of the soul be myth, the wandering of matter is a scientific fact. If there were no bacteria, the material embodied in animals and plants of one generation would after their decease remain bound, as are the chemical combinations in the rocks; new life could not develop, because there would be a lack of body material. Since bacteria cause the dead body to come to the earth in rapid putrefaction, they alone cause the springing forth of new life and therefore make the continuance of living creatures possible. The wonderful fact that putrefaction is a work performed by bacteria does not stand alone; there is an entire series of chemical changes which are produced by bacteria and similar microscopic forms. These processes are usually designated as fermentation phenomena, and the organisms which cause the same as fermentation fungi.

## SPIRIT OF TRUE SCIENCE

Most of the great discoverers of science have been of this cast of mind—men who saw the broad synthesis and interdependence of Nature as well as the intricate details of process. This is the difference between a botanist and a naturalist—between a gatherer of "facts" and a lover of Nature. One so capable of recognizing the "eternal circle" of organic life could have been persuaded that the wandering of the soul is mythical only as a result of the ultimate religious corruption of his time. In spirit, his words vary not at all from the writings of a later and greater student of Life:

> Every atom and molecule in the Universe is both *life-giving* and *death-giving* to that form, inasmuch as it builds by aggregation universes and the ephemeral vehicles ready to receive the transmigrating soul, and as eternally destroys and changes the *forms* and expells those souls from their temporary abodes. It creates and kills; it is self-generating and self-destroying; it brings into being, and annihilates, that mystery of mysteries—the *living body* of man, animal, or plant, every second in time and space. . . . (*S. D.* I, 261).

## EFFECT OF CRIME DRAMAS

The International Association of police chiefs at a meeting held recently in Milwaukee considered the detrimental influence exercised by radio crime dramas upon the morals of children. According to the New York *Times* of Sept. 13, the chiefs "adopted a resolution to supply no factual information on crimes to the radio." Social workers dealing with the young have from time to time made similar observations, alleging the radio to be one of the causes for the increase of crime among youths. Now we have corroboration from the police chiefs of many lands.

It is generally recognized that these demoralizing effects are due to the power of suggestion over the plastic and imaginative minds of the young. Theosophy in addition gives as a cause the power of sound to re-awaken the very maleficent forces involved in the crimes dramatized. On this subject *The Secret Doctrine* states:

> . . . *the spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in,* by the modern "sages." Because sound and rhythm are closely related to the four Elements of the Ancients; and because such or another vibration in the air is sure to awaken corresponding powers, union with which produces good or bad results, as the case may be. No student was ever allowed to recite historical, religious, or any real events in so many unmistakable words, lest the powers connected with the event should be once more attracted (I, 307).